

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
NOVEMBER 7, 2012**

Town of Bedford
Bedford Town Hall
Selectmen's Meeting Room

PRESENT: William Moonan, Chair; Karen Kalil-Brown, Clerk; Carol Carlson; Alan Long; Kevin Latady

ABSENT: Lorrie Dunham

Mr. Moonan introduced himself and read the emergency evacuation notice.

PRESENTATION: Ms. Kalil-Brown read the notice of the meeting.

PETITION #007-13 – Ginger Japanese Cuisine, 88 Great Road, for signs.

Meiling Khoo, the owner of Ginger Japanese Cuisine, greeted the Historic District Commission (HDC) and stated that she was applying for approval of two illuminated wall signs. She noted that the signs complied with the dimensions allowed under the By-Law, so the approval was for the aesthetics of the signs, not the size.

There was extensive discussion about the placement of the front sign and whether it should hang over the balcony, hang under the balcony, or be placed on the wall underneath the balcony. It was agreed by all the Commission members that the sign was too large, and should at the very least be small enough to fit between the two columns at the front of the building. Ms. Khoo said she would be happy to make the sign smaller and design it any way the Board members preferred.

Mr. Moonan talked with the applicant about the mechanism by which the sign would be hung. Mr. Latady drew a rudimentary drawing of how the sign might look if it were hung under the balcony. The Commission gave it to the applicant as a reference.

There was conversation about the illumination of the two signs. Ms. Khoo said that the sign on the side of the building would be lit with gooseneck lighting fixtures, and the sign on the front would have channel-lit letters, with illumination behind them, in the same style as the CVS sign. Mr. Moonan said he was unsure why the applicant wanted gooseneck illumination fixtures on one sign and channel-lit letters for the other. Ms. Khoo said that was what her signmaker suggested, but she would be happy to make it consistent if the Board members preferred. Mr. Long agreed that it would make much more sense, and be more visually appealing, to have the gooseneck fixtures for both signs. Ms. Khoo said she would make that change to the plan.

Ms. Kalil-Brown suggested that the words “Ginger Japanese Cuisine” be on the front sign as well as the side sign; she noted that any people driving by who weren’t familiar with the restaurant wouldn’t know what the word “Ginger” meant by itself, but the addition of “Japanese Cuisine” informed them that it was a restaurant. The other HDC members agreed.

Ms. Carlson said she was glad the other Commission members seemed to be in agreement about the sign, but she didn’t personally feel that even the changes being suggested tonight would help make it attractive enough to approve. She said that the columns are one of the few special features about the building, and she would like them to stand out without the distraction of a sign hanging directly between them. She added that she doesn’t personally feel that the sign itself is particularly attractive, as the red color is too red and bright and might not look attractive on the building.

There was further discussion about the font and size of the sign. Mr. Long said that the proposed white background color was a bit bright, and it would probably look attractive if it were a more subtle color – perhaps something that matched one of the colors of the building.

Ms. Khoo said she thought something that matched the ivory color of the building itself might look attractive. Ms. Kalil-Brown agreed, but noted that if the sign matched the color of the building, it should probably have some kind of border around it to distinguish the sign from the surrounding structure.

The Board talked with the applicant about the location of the sign on the east side of the structure; placing the sign over one of the windows, instead of over the door, was considered.

The Commission members talked about the material of the signs and whether they were amenable to aluminum as opposed to MDO or vinyl. Ms. Carlson said she was more concerned about the shape of the sign, as she found the rectangular shape to be visually boring; she said a simple softening of the edges would help a great deal to make it more appealing.

Mr. Moonan said it was clear that there were enough significant changes being made to this sign that another hearing would be necessary. The other members agreed.

Jeffrey Cohen, a resident of 4 Houlton Street and a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), greeted the Commission and stated that this application will also be presented to the ZBA tomorrow night, solely for the illumination. Ms. Carlson said she wasn’t aware that the ZBA had any jurisdiction over signs in the Historic District. Mr. Cohen explained that the ZBA ruled on the illumination of all signs in Bedford, regardless of the district. He said that he would like the Zoning Board to be able to rule on the illumination aspect of this sign tomorrow night, if the applicant were ready, so he wanted to ensure that the HDC had no problems with that aspect of the sign; that way, the applicant would only have to return for one more HDC meeting instead of being continued for another ZBA meeting as well.

Mr. Moonan said there didn't seem to be any problem with the illumination, so if the applicant could get the paperwork together by tomorrow, he didn't imagine there should be any issue with the Zoning Board meeting.

Ms. Khoo talked about the items that she planned on changing and said she would be contacting her sign manufacturer in the morning.

MOTION:

Ms. Kalil-Brown moved to continue Ginger Japanese, 88 Great Road, to the meeting of December 5, 2012 at 7:30 PM.

Mr. Long seconded the motion.

Voting in favor: Moonan, Kalil-Brown, Carlson, Long, and Latady

Voting against: None

Abstained: None

The motion carried unanimously, 5-0-0.

Ms. Khoo thanked the Commission members for their time and said she would see them next month.

Mr. Moonan called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION:

Ms. Carlson moved to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Long seconded the motion.

Voting in favor: Moonan, Kalil-Brown, Carlson, Long, and Latady

Voting against: None

Abstained: None

The motion carried unanimously, 5-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

William Moonan, Chairman Date

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott Gould
HDC Assistant